



The Early Care and Education Workforce in North Carolina

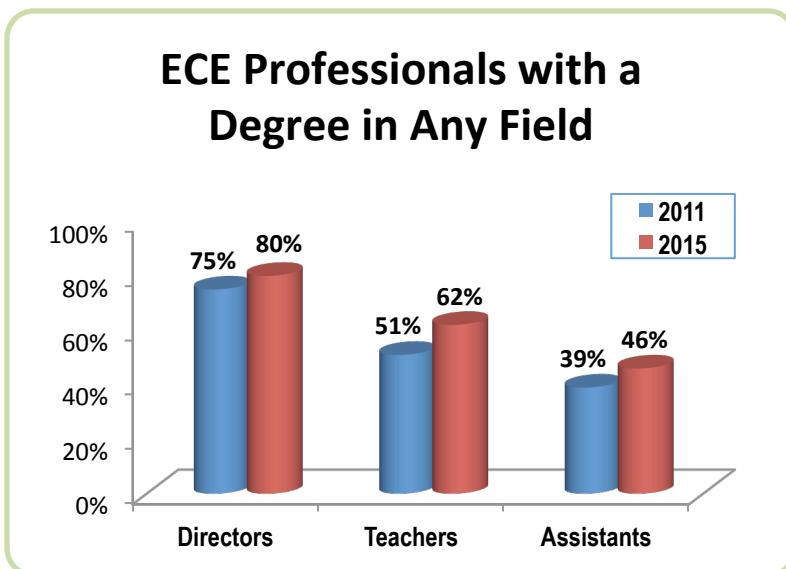
2015 Statewide Fact Sheet for Early Care and Education Centers

This fact sheet summarizes key North Carolina findings from a recent statewide survey of the early care and education workforce in which directors, teachers and assistant teachers participated from across the state. A 25% random sample of licensed centers serving children from birth to five years of age was surveyed. Surveys were returned from **71%** of directors and **52%** of teachers and assistant teachers in those programs.

North Carolina has a mix of star rated licensed centers and both public and private programs. In the centers that responded, **73%** of children enrolled are in 4- or 5-star care. **Fifty-eight (58%)** are in for-profit programs, **24%** in non-profit centers, and **18%** in public programs.

Education

- *Degreed professionals.* In North Carolina, **forty-seven percent (47%)** of center directors, **38%** of teachers and **28%** of assistant teachers have at least an associate degree in early childhood education (ECE) or a related field. A higher percentage of providers have a degree in any field; **80%** of directors, **62%** of teachers and **46%** of assistant teachers. In each group, education levels have increased since 2011 when 75% of directors, 51% of teachers and 39% of assistant teachers had a degree in any field (see figure to the right).



- *Other educational credentials.* Statewide, **72%** of directors and **24%** of teachers and assistant teachers have the N.C. Early Childhood Administration Credential. Similarly, **10%** of directors and **9%** of teachers and assistant teachers have the B-K/Preschool Add-on license in addition to their bachelor's degree.
- *Coursework.* Most child care professionals in North Carolina have taken some college courses. This includes **99%** of directors, **98%** of teachers and **90%** of assistant teachers who have taken at least one college course in any field. Additionally, **14%** of directors, **17%** of teachers and **19%** of assistant teachers are currently taking courses towards a degree or credential in the early childhood field.

Experience and Turnover

- *Experience.* Statewide, directors have **18.0** years of experience in the child care field compared to **11.5** years for teachers and **8.0** years for assistant teachers. Furthermore, directors have been in their current centers for a median of **6.4** years. Teachers have been in their programs for **3.6** years and assistant teachers for **2.5** years.

- *Prospective Turnover.* When asked, **12%** of directors, **19%** of teachers and **21%** of assistant teachers said they did not think they would be in the field in three years. Statewide, “better pay” was listed as the number one incentive in all three groups to keep them in the field with “better benefits” listed as number two by all three groups, directors, teachers and assistant teachers.
- *Turnover.* Directors in North Carolina report that **18%** of full-time teachers and assistants left their child care center last year. Broken down by position, **19%** of full-time teachers left their center last year and **13%** of full-time assistant teachers left their center during this time.

Wages and Benefits

- *Median wages.* Center directors in North Carolina earn **\$16.00** per hour, teachers earn **\$10.97** per hour and assistant teachers earn **\$9.97** per hour. Only slight increases have occurred since 2011. When adjusted to 2015 dollars, directors made \$15.89 per hour, teachers made \$10.54 per hours and assistant teachers made \$9.48 per hour in 2011 (see figure to the right). When examined by degree, teaching staff earn increasingly more as more education is attained. These increases are particularly notable with ECE specific degrees.
- *Public assistance.* Statewide, **39%** of teachers and **39%** of assistant teachers have needed at least one type of public assistance (e.g., TANF, Medicaid, SNAP/food stamps, etc.) in the past three years.
- *Other compensation.* Of the centers responding statewide where staff work overtime, **67%** report paying staff at time and a half. For teachers, **11%** report working a second job while **14%** of assistant teachers likewise said that they have other employment to make ends meet.
- *Health insurance and sick leave.* Of the centers in the State, **19%** pay for the full cost of health insurance, **30%** provide partial assistance and **51%** provide no financial support for health insurance for their employees. Moreover, **19%** of teachers and **17%** of assistant teachers have no health insurance from any source. When teachers get sick, **31%** of centers provide between 1 and 5 days of paid sick leave per year and **41%** give 6 or more days. However, **28%** of centers provide no paid time off for illness.
- *Professional support benefits.* Of the centers responding statewide **78%** help staff pay for education or training expenses, **60%** provide paid time off for training and **67%** provide paid preparation or planning time.

